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ABSTRACT

An 11-point plan was developed by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) in cooperation with the California Department of Education for the 1990-91 year. Major program objectives were designed to enhance agency involvement, identify underlying causes of student attrition, examine test administration and security practices, expand adult basic education (ABE) pre-post progress testing, facilitate data collection at the local level, and expand training and technical assistance services. Some of the goal-related accomplishments of the project were the following: (1) new appraisal and placement instruments were developed; (2) scannable answer sheets were developed to facilitate data collection; (3) the program manual for ABE 321 grant programs was updated; (4) fall training and ongoing training and technical assistance were provided to more than 248 participants statewide; (5) 28 percent more data were collected; and (6) a statewide accountability report was prepared. (Twenty-three figures and 6 tables report the data gathered by the project, such as gender, age, ethnic background, number of school years, reason for enrollment, and program type for ABE students; and student achievement and progress according to mean reading and listening scores and goal attainment.) (KC)

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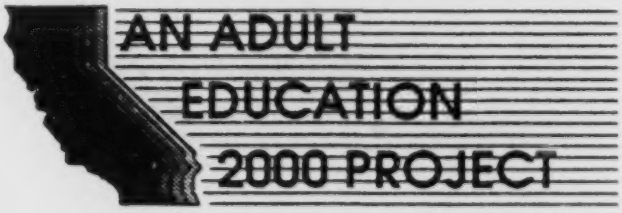

July 1, 1990 – June 30, 1991

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CASAS Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System

July, 1991

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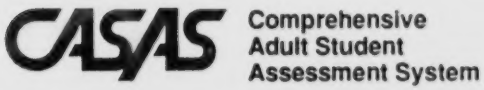

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July, 1991

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Publication of the information contained in this report is used for state and federal program accountability. This report was written for the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) by June Simon, Patricia Rickard and Ardis Breslauer. Computer programming and data presentation and interpretation were managed by Richard Ackerman and supported by Randy Ilas. Diane Bailey coordinated data collection, developed data displays and produced the report. Finally, Martha Gustafson provided valuable assistance with coordination of the final report.

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Chapter One
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Profound change has occurred in Adult Basic Education (ABE) in California in recent years. New populations such as amnesty applicants and GAIN participants with diverse learning needs have required adult education programs to respond with new curriculum, instructional strategies and more relevant assessment. Building upon initial efforts in the mid-1970's to improve curricula and provide staff development, a statewide assessment of ABE programs was conducted in 1978. This assessment revealed several problems in adult basic education including the lack of uniform standards, high attrition rates and the use of traditional curricular material and assessment procedures. California subsequently adopted a competency-based, life-skills, literacy approach to instruction focused on the "demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for an individual to function proficiently in society."[1] Since its incorporation into the 1981 three-year State Plan for Adult Basic Education, Competency-Based Education (CBE) has been the cornerstone of Adult Basic Education in California. These pioneering activities in the mid-1970s and early 1980s launched a decade of progress in meeting learner needs in adult basic education programs in California.

Reflecting its long-term commitment to CBE, the California Department of Education continues its support for a learner-centered functional skills instructional focus in adult basic education programs. In response to the U.S. Department of Education mandate calling for better program accountability, the State has also

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[1]National Center for Education Statistics, 1982

initiated the steps needed to evaluate program effectiveness. The 1989-93 four-year State Plan for federally funded ABE programs specifically addresses the requisite data requirements which provide the foundation for accountability reporting at both a state and federal level. California's current year activities in adult basic education particularly focuses upon indicators of program effectiveness. Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Adult Education requires specification of accountability guidelines which meet the needs of students, educational providers, policy makers and funding sources. Accountability indicators satisfy more than the recent Federal ABE mandate--they provide an avenue for measuring the ability to achieve the goals underlying the National Education Act of 1991 as well as the America 2000 strategy for accomplishing them through local efforts. Most importantly, programs are accountable to the students they serve and demonstrate effectiveness in helping learners attain their goals.

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION (CBE)

While competency-based education is variously defined, common elements in definitions include the presence of clear performance standards with success determined by demonstrated outcomes. Competencies are clearly specified and communicated to participants, staff, employers and the community and the focus is on transfer of the learning process to actual application of course concepts and basic skills. Prior learning and experience is taken into consideration in the development of educational and employment plans. CBE program goals are learner-centered, mirroring individual goals.

Student needs are identified and targeted in course content, text selection and teaching methods. Life skills are integrated with basic listening, speaking, reading, writing and computation skills providing the foundation for life skill acquisition relevant to an adult student's everyday functional needs and goals. In the broadest sense, the goal of competency-based education is to provide all students with the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to function in society and become lifelong learners. The goal of competency-based education is akin to the national goal for education that "every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."[2]

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2 U.S. Department of Education. Report to Congress on Defining Literacy and the National Adult Literacy Survey. Washington D.C.: U.S. Printing Office, July 1990.

321 FEDERALLY FUNDED ABE PROGRAMS

Federal funding of adult basic education has associated responsibility. The California Department of Education is responsible for monitoring local Adult Basic Education programs receiving federal ABE funding, for maintaining an accountability system and for annually reporting the impact of the federal funds at the local level, including reporting student progress and outcomes such as goal attainment to the U.S. Department of Education. The 1989-93 four-year state plan for federally funded ABE programs specifies that pre-post testing will be conducted as part of this accountability system. The need to identify additional indicators of accountability is also recognized.

The California Department of Education must report annually an accounting of state adult education funding to the State Department of Finance and the Legislature, not only for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, but also for high school completion, parenting, older adult, special education and adult vocational education programs. A standardized system of assessment with the capacity for adaptation to diverse programs and student populations would provide the mechanism for satisfying these annual reporting requirements.

ACCOUNTABILITY MANDATE

The U.S. Department of Education (Program Memorandum OVAE/DAEL-FY90-28) mandates better program accountability for Congress and other policy makers. Section 352 (3) requires that states gather and analyze data during the four-year period 1989-93 to determine program effectiveness. The California State Department of Education is responsible for

- continued monitoring of local adult basic education programs that receive federal ABE funding;
- accountability system maintenance; and
- annual reporting to the U.S. Department of Education regarding the impact of federal funds at the local level.

The 1990-91 California State Plan for Adult Education required a new sampling design and data collection process in order to report student progress and outcomes

such as goal attainment. As part of their ABE 321 Grant with the California Department of Education, local Adult Education Agencies are required to pre and post-test a representative sampling of their ABE/ESL students. This assessment provides an extremely effective means for meeting the accountability mandate at the local, state and national levels.

NEED FOR STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT

As stated above, the need for consistent assessment procedures was clearly identified in the 1981 assessment of ABE programs in the State of California. At that time, the California Department of Education was unable to reliably report on student achievement or student goal attainment data. This led to the recognition that standardized assessment was requisite for comprehensive accountability of monies on both a state and federal level.

To successfully implement a competency-based program for adult students functioning at all levels in adult basic education programs, a statewide comprehensive curriculum management and assessment system was needed. Once developed and implemented, this system would enable accurate student placement into appropriate program and level, monitor student progress and certify competency attainment. Through effective leadership by the Adult Education Unit of the California Department of Education, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) was established.

CASAS

In conjunction with its continuing commitment to competency-based adult educational programs and recognition of the need for both systematized program implementation and competency-based assessment, the State of California embarked upon a project to meet these needs. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) was the statewide project designed to support the establishment of competency-based instructional programs.

CASAS, originally funded by the Federal Adult Basic Education Act, Section 310, P.L.91-230 as amended, was established as a consortium of local education agencies that provide adult basic education programs. The goal of CASAS was to develop, field test and implement a comprehensive, statewide curriculum management and assessment system adaptable to diverse adult student populations and program/delivery systems.

The extensive and systematic development and implementation over a ten year period provides a solid base and is integral to the accountability system for the 1989-93 California State Plan for Adult Basic Education. CASAS provides relevant and reliable assessment for adults enrolled in adult basic education programs which are congruent with the curriculum and instruction provided. CASAS was designed to impact at the agency and institutional level making possible articulation among program levels and establishing a uniform method for reporting progress and providing a system of accountability. The long-term effect of implementation has resulted in widespread meaningful reporting of progress at local, state and national levels.

CASAS provides a standard statewide accountability system not only for all adult education programs receiving federal monies for Adult Basic Education but also for all amnesty programs receiving SLIAG funding and for the GAIN program, thus providing a comprehensive picture across these diverse programs. The integration of CBE and CASAS is the link between curriculum, instruction and assessment. CASAS is the curriculum management system which has withstood the tests of diversity and time.

REPORT IMPETUS

One requirement of the ABE/321 grant to agencies is to participate in the collection of statewide data on the adult education population in the state of California. In 1990-91, supplemental ABE 321 funds were received by 242 agencies including community colleges, unified school districts and community based organizations. Additional agencies and institutions including the California Department of Corrections (20 state prisons), the California Youth Authority (10 state facilities) and the California Department of Developmental Services (11 state hospitals) were funded under cooperative agreements with the California Department of Education. Policies were established for student pre-post testing and data collection within each respective jurisdiction.

Over an eight year period, CASAS has established and maintained a database describing the adult education population in 321 funded ABE, ESL and other programs in the state of California. This systematic data collection and analysis has provided essential information including student achievement, goal attainment, barriers to education, demographic characteristics and trends over time. CASAS continues its role in data collection, analysis and report preparation. This report

includes data collected for the time period from July 1, 1990 through June 30, 1991, from approximately 90,000 adult basic education students.

The identification of Project Goals and major program objectives established for the 1990-91 academic year are outlined in Chapter Two. The subsequent chapters discuss the means and the time frame in which each was accomplished. Progress and attainment pertaining to student-centered program goals is found in Chapter Three; Chapter Four presents progress and attainment of program goals at the agency and program level; and goal attainment at the state and federal levels is presented in Chapter Five. Finally, Chapter Six summarizes goal attainment for 1990-91 and briefly discusses ongoing developmental activities.

Chapter Two

PROJECT GOALS

PRIOR YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 1990 Report[3] prepared by CASAS for the California Department of Education addressed the program objectives for the 1989-90 academic year, certifying the accomplishment of established program objectives. The three point plan for 1989-90 strengthened agency involvement, expanded the ABE pre-post achievement testing and facilitated data collection at the local level. Goal accomplishment was derived through revalidation of competencies; development of new competency statements; materials development including new answer sheets, locator tests, reading pre-post tests; the provision of training and technical assistance; evaluation of support services; and development of curriculum areas and levels. Significant accomplishment was rendered in data collection including a notable increase in the size of the student database, goal attainment results and the publication of the statewide accountability report. Technological advances, such as the scannable answer sheet, and acceptance of unpaired data where appropriate allowed expansion of the data components of the system, enabling progress in both the quality and quantity of data.

1990-91 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The 1990-91 Project Goals identified by CASAS in cooperation with the California Department of Education, Adult Education Unit are delineated in the Work Plan and reiterated below.

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[3] CASAS Statewide Accountability System For Federally Funded 321 Adult Basic Education Programs, August 1990.

1.1 Expansion of the annual ABE pre-post achievement testing and additional student goal attainment and classroom description data collection to a representative sampling of students enrolled in all federally funded ABE programs in the state of California.

1.2 Testing materials, answer sheets, sampling guidelines and requirements to each funded agency.

Reading, math and listening tests will be provided to all funded agencies based on the numbers they will be pre-post testing. Additional materials can be obtained at cost from CASAS.

1.3 Initiating and expanding this accountability system to newly funded ABE programs served by the Adult Education Unit including those grantees under Section 372 English Literacy Program.

1.4 Training and technical assistance required to administer, score, interpret and report the data at the local program level in an effective manner.

Initial training for all 321 Agencies will be by teleconference with downlink sites throughout California. The training will be taped for further training purposes. Technical assistance will be provided to new agencies including those under Section 372. This may include individual or group meetings, videotape or site visits.

1.5 A study of quality control procedures of the assessment process in a sampling of agencies.

Six sites including adult schools, community colleges, CBO, library programs and corrections will become part of a quality control pilot study. Classes at these sites will be observed during the testing procedure. An observation questionnaire will be developed to obtain the data on how the quality and security of assessment is maintained, as well as how data are used at the classroom and program level. Results of the study will be used to develop new guidelines and practices for test administration, scoring and storage and for use of data in managing instruction and for program planning.

1.6 Management of the data collection, analysis and program evaluation reports required for state and federal reporting requirements.

By July 30, 1991, a final report will be issued to SDE as detailed under General Information and Procedures, Section E.

1.7 Maintenance of the assessment components for placement into program, diagnosis and certification of competency attainment as well as the monitoring of group and individual student progress that is currently generating the accountability data for state and federal reporting.

1.8 Continuing technical assistance support for regional technical assistance centers (OTAN) including training of trainers and updating of training materials.

1.9 Evaluating pre-post testing in relation to attrition/retention at selected pilot sites.

A study will be conducted to obtain data on student retention/attrition as related to pre-test scores and demographics. Five pilot sites will be selected throughout the state. (Factors for agency selection will include a combination of urban, rural, large, small, adult education, community colleges, CBO and literacy programs.)

The study will obtain data on those students who were pre-tested in the Fall but were not present at the 75 or 100 hour post-testing time.

Telephone or personal follow up interviews of early leavers will be conducted by trained support staff in the local agency. All interviews shall be conducted based on a standard set of questions developed by CASAS in cooperation with SDE Adult Education Unit.

Results of the questionnaire will be paired with demographic data, pre-test scores and reasons for entering the program. The objectives of the study are to obtain current and accurate information on the reasons for retention/attrition of a sampling of the adult student population in California and to determine the actual costs to agencies and the processes needed to conduct such follow up studies.

2.0 Presentation of and training on the ABE Section 321 funded pre-post assessment project both within California and in other states as appropriate and requested by SDE, YAAES, Adult Education Unit.

CASAS presentations will be scheduled at AAACE in Salt Lake City, TESOL in New York and CATESOL in California.

2.1 Establishment of a 321 advisory group.

The advisory group will consist of 1) California Department of Education and CASAS staff; 2) a representative from Adult Schools, Correction Education, Community Colleges, Special Education, CBOs, Libraries and OTAN.

This group will convene twice a year for the purpose of advising CASAS staff and SDE Adult Education Unit staff. The advisory group will complete the following tasks:

1. Recommend technical assistance support needed to implement student assessment within different delivery systems.

2. Recommend the expansion of student performance measures for accountability.

3. Review 1989-90 report on student progress and goal attainment measures by provider type and make specific recommendations of a process for effective student accountability for 1991-92.

The following chapters delineate the means by which each of the eleven Project Goals was met and its time frame. Ongoing reference to specific Project Goals is provided to facilitate cross-reference.

Chapter Three

ACCOUNTABILITY DATA

The CASAS Statewide Accountability System for Federally Funded Adult Basic Education Programs Proposal (Section B, Part I, Project Goal Number 1.6) calls for the management of the data collection, analysis and program evaluation reports required for state and federal reporting requirements. Project Goal Number 1.7 addresses the maintenance of the assessment components for program placement, diagnosis and certification of competency attainment. Maintenance of the assessment component used for the monitoring of group and individual student progress is also included in Goal Number 1.7 recognizing that these data serve as the basis for the accountability data for state and federal reporting.

Demographic data, pre and post-test progress, and student goal attainment information is collected on one scannable answer sheet. Many agencies have implemented the CASAS Micro Management System (CMMS) which allows local agencies to scan answer sheets and generate student and class profiles, progress reports and other summary information. These scannable answer sheets provide an integrated database enabling comparative demographic, test score and goal attainment data.

Because some respondents did not complete all items, the actual number of respondents for whom data are available is indicated (N=) in the graphic presentations. In Figure 5, for example, the number of years of school completed was identified on only 79,189 out of 89,921 answer sheets. In other words, 10,732 answer sheets were submitted without this information. This chapter presents descriptive data summarizing demographic, educational and program characteristics, Goal Attainment and Barriers to Education. Student achievement/progress data is found in Chapter Four.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A demographic profile of the 321 adult basic education student population including gender, age, ethnic background and native language, is presented in both graphic and narrative form below. The first three of these variables are also presented as a composite in Table 1.

Gender

The Gender of 321 program participants is identified on the answer sheet. The gender profile of this student population is presented in Figure 1. More than one-half (52.1%) of the respondents were Male, 47.9 percent Female. These findings are similar to 1989-90.

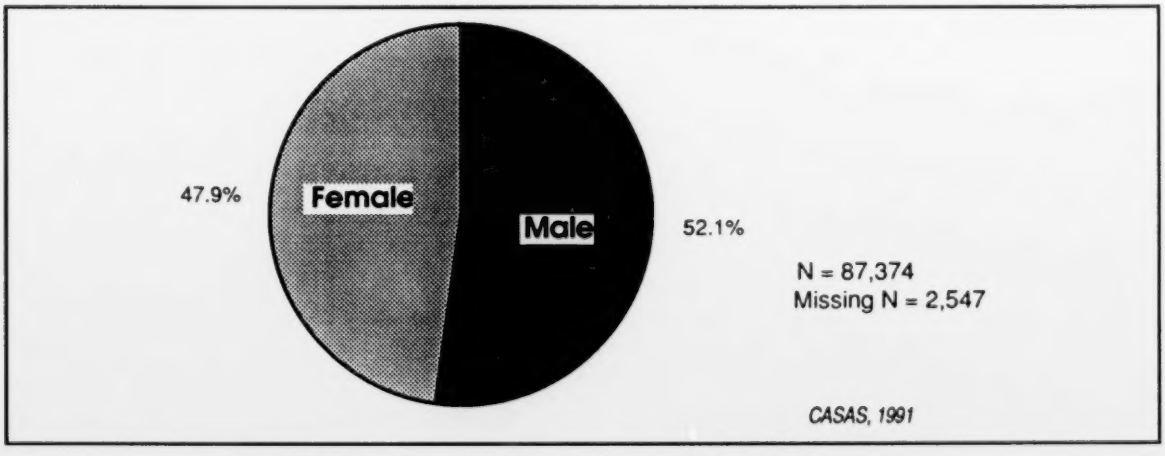


Figure 1 - Gender of Adult Basic Education Students

Age

The actual age of learners in this 321 population is recorded on the answer sheet and aggregated into categories for data analysis and reporting. As presented in Figure 2, the majority of students (58.3%) were between the ages of 22 through 40. Twenty-two percent were younger than 22 and the remaining 19.7 percent were older than 40. This data indicates a slight increase in the percentage of students in the younger age categories compared to 1989-90.

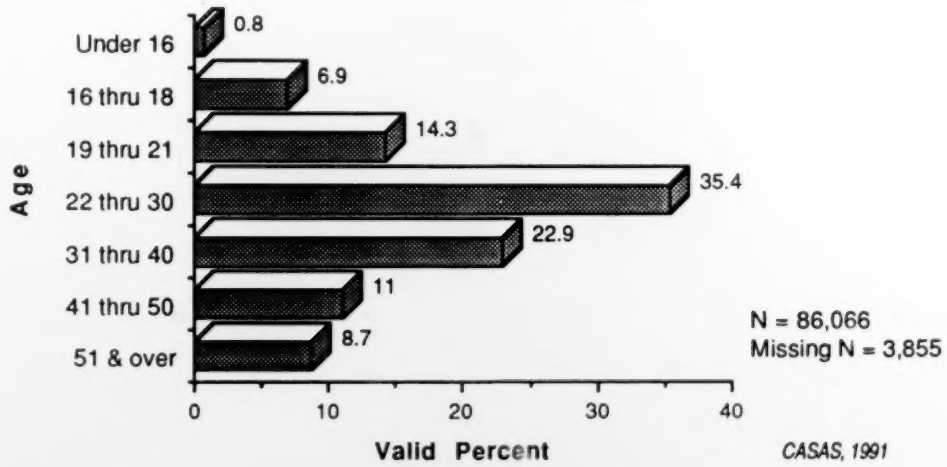


Figure 2 - Age of Adult Basic Education Students

Ethnic Background

The Ethnic Background of adult basic education students is reported in one of nine ethnic categories including Caucasian, American/Alaskan Indian, Hispanic, Black (Not Hispanic), Asian, Filipino, Indo-Chinese, Pacific Islander and Other. The majority (60.2%) of the adult basic education students in this study population are Hispanic. Of the remaining 39.8 percent, nearly 17.5 percent were Asian, nine percent White, 6.9 percent Indo-Chinese and 3.9 percent Black. Other ethnic groups represented were Filipino (.6%), American Indian (.2%), Pacific Islander (.2%), and Other (1.6%). These data indicate increases in the percentage of students in the Indo-Chinese and Asian populations compared to 1989-90.

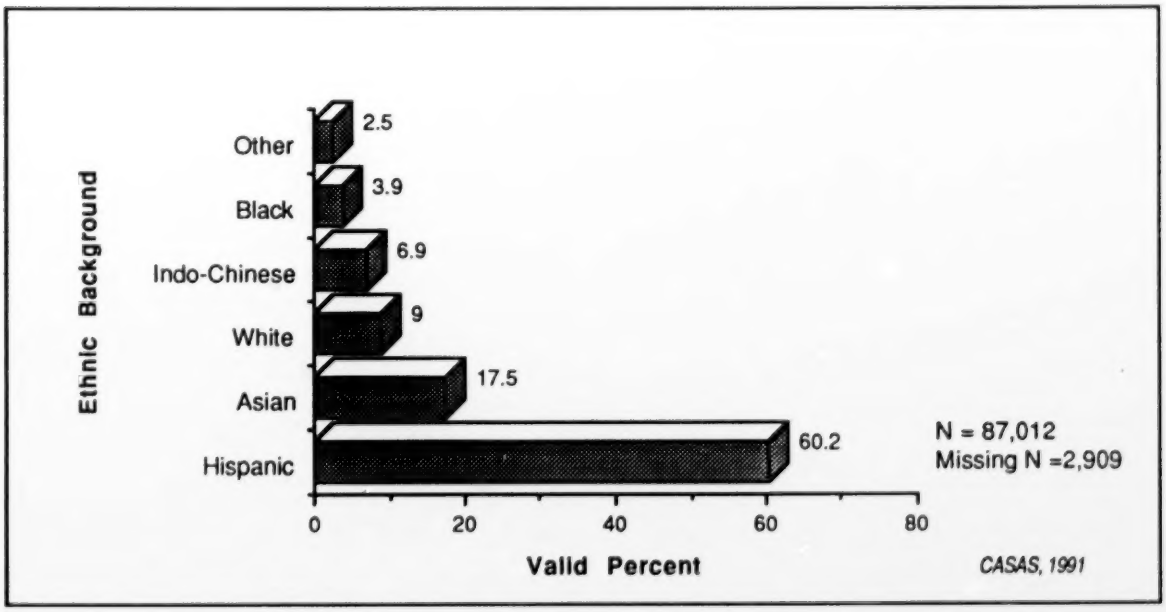


Figure 3 - Ethnic Background of Adult Basic Education Students

Gender, Age and Ethnic Background

Table 1. presents the percentage of students in each Age category by Gender and Ethnic Background. Hispanic Males comprised more than one-third (33.6%) of this adult basic education population, the majority of whom (16.6%) were between the ages of 16 and 24 and the remaining 15.2 percent ages 25-44. Hispanic Females were the second largest group (27.3%) followed by Asian or Pacific Islander Females (14.5%) and Males (11.4%). Pacific Islanders were the only ethnic category accounting for one percent or greater in the 60 and over age category.

Blacks, Whites and American Indians/Alaskan Natives of each gender comprised less than one percent of all age categories with two exceptions. Black Males represented slightly greater than one percent in the 16-24 and 25-44 age categories and White Males and Females accounted for approximately 2.5 percent of all students in the 25-44 age category.

Table 1 - Gender, Age and Ethnic Background of ABE Students

Age Group	Gender, Age and Ethnic Background of ABE Participants										
	American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Black not of Hispanic Origin		Hispanic		White not of Hispanic Origin		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
16-24	>1%	>1%	2.5%	2.5%	1.2%	>1%	16.6%	9.9%	>1%	>1%	35.0%
25-44	>1%	>1%	5.8%	8.4%	1.1%	>1%	15.2%	14.3%	2.5%	2.6%	50.8%
45-59	>1%	>1%	1.9%	2.4%	>1%	>1%	1.5%	2.5%	>1%	>1%	10.1%
60+	>1%	>1%	1.2%	1.2%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	4.1%
Total	>1%	>1%	11.4%	14.5%	2.5%	1.4%	33.6%	27.3%	4.4%	4.7%	100%

N = 80,745
Missing N = 9,176

CASAS 1991

Native Language

The Native Language of program participants is identified by filling in the appropriate selection from sixteen language categories or "Other". Congruent with the ethnic background information reported above, the majority (59.3%) of learners in this study population identified Spanish as their native language. More than ten percent (10.5%) were native English speakers; 8.2 percent Chinese and another 5.9 percent identified Vietnamese as their native language (see Figure 4).

Other native languages of students were Hmong (2.0%), Korean (2.0%), Laotian (1.7%), Japanese (1.7%) and Farsi (1.1%). These languages and nearly four percent (3.8%) "Other", accounted for more than 95 percent (96.2%) of the languages cited. The remaining 3.8 percent is accounted for by several languages, each comprising less than one percent of the total population including Arabic, Cambodian, Russian, Portugese, Tagalog, Polish and Urdu. These native language data represent a decrease in the percentage of Spanish speakers and increases in the percentage of Indo-Chinese and Asian languages compared to 1989-90.

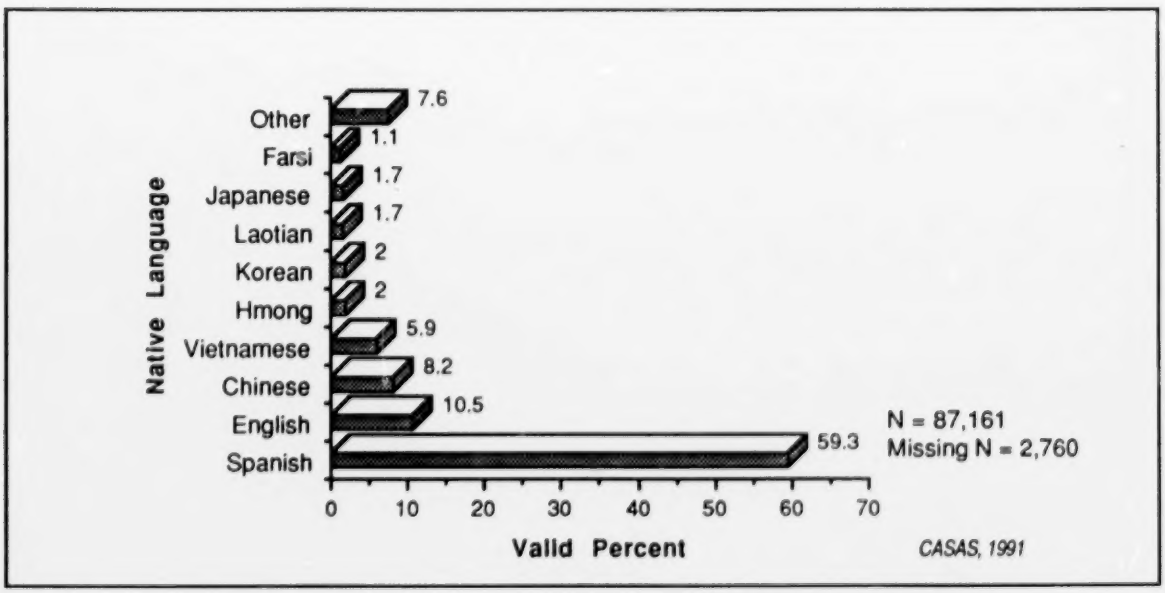


Figure 4 - Native Language of Adult Basic Education Students

EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Following is an educational profile of the 321 adult basic education student population, including Highest Grade Level Completed and Diploma/Degree Earned. Program Type and Level, Provider Type and descriptive classroom data are presented. Composite data are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Grade Level Completed

The number of years of school completed by 321 participants in the U.S. or another country is identified and aggregated for analysis and reporting (see Figure 5). Nearly one-half (48%) of the adult students reported completing 9 years or less of schooling; 15.7 percent 10-11 years; 19.3 percent 12 years of education; and 17 percent reported education beyond 12 years. These findings represent a decrease in the percentage of students reporting 9 years or less and an increase in those completing twelve years or more of school compared to 1989-90.

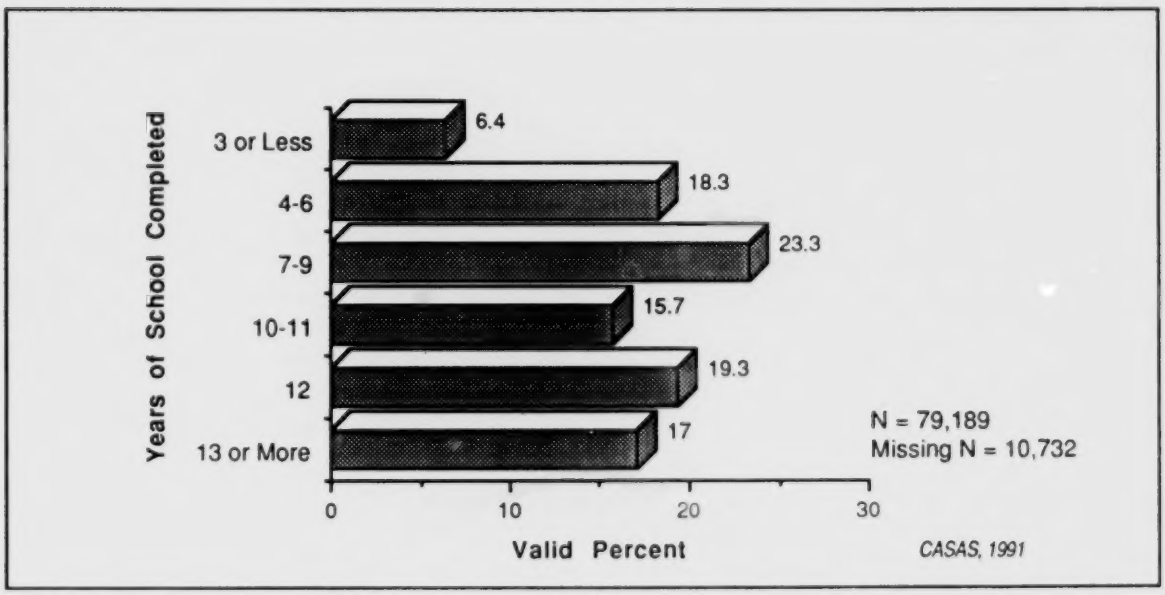


Figure 5 - Number of Years of School Completed by Adult Basic Education Students

Highest Diploma/Degree Earned

Nearly 54 percent (53.8%) of the adult learners reported that they had not earned a diploma or degree of any kind in the U.S. or another country. Compared to 27.2 percent in 1989-90, 26.3 percent of the students in this 321 population reported that they had completed high school. The remaining 19.9 percent completed either a Technical, AA, Four Year College or Other degree. Compared to 1989-90, there appears to be a marked decrease in the percentage of students reporting completion of an AA degree and a slight decrease in the Technical category (see Figure 6).

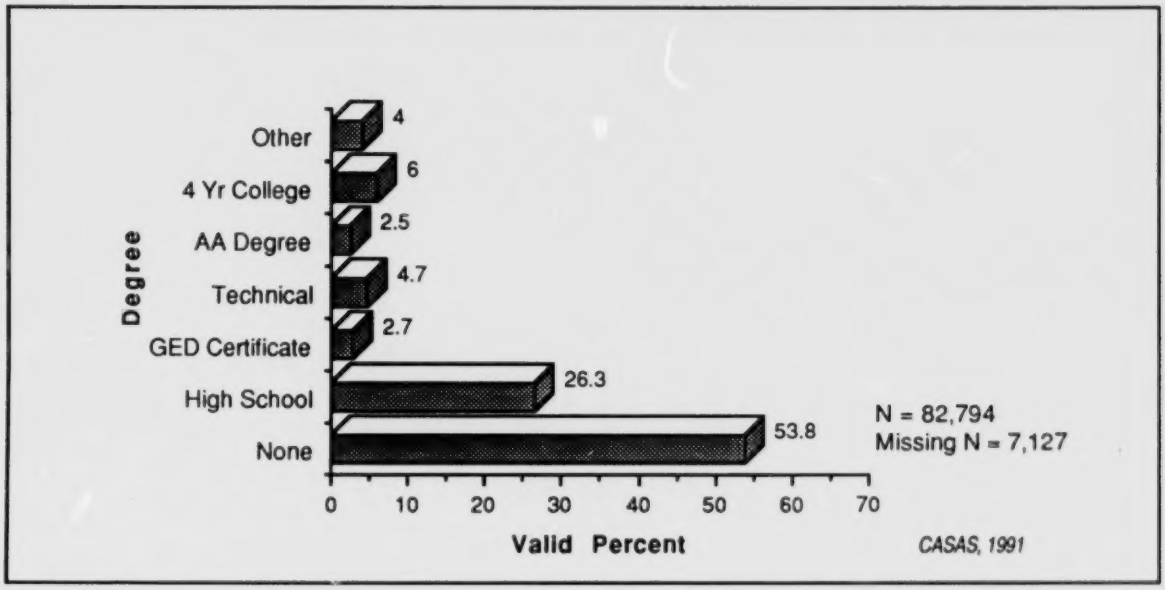


Figure 6 - Highest Diploma/Degree Earned by Adult Basic Education Students

Program Type and Level

The majority (82.3%) of adult learners in this study population were enrolled in ESL programs, the majority of these (44.1%) in beginning level classes. As presented in Figure 7, 14.3 percent were enrolled in beginning through intermediate level ABE programs and 3.4 percent in other programs. Each of the remaining categories accounted for less than two percent of the students in this study population. These findings suggest a slight increase in ESL enrollment and a corresponding decrease in ABE student enrollment.

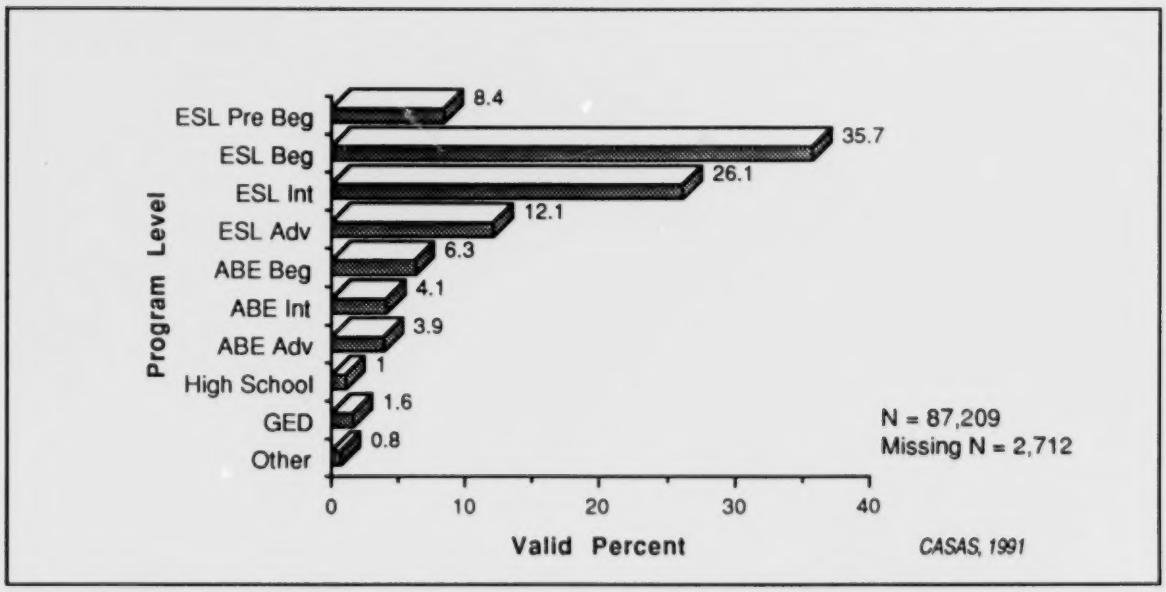


Figure 7 - Program Type and Level of Adult Basic Education Students

Gender, Ethnic Background and Program Level

As presented in Table 2, Hispanic Males and Females comprised the largest percentages within each Gender-Ethnic category of students enrolled in ESL or ABE Classes at the Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced Levels with only one exception. White Males comprised 1.9 percent of beginning level ABE students, White Females 1.4 percent. While less than the percentages of Hispanics at each level, Asians or Pacific Islanders comprised a notable percentage of students enrolled in all Levels of ESL. Each of the remaining gender-ethnic categories accounted for less than one percent of the enrollment in any of the remaining program level categories.

Table 2 - Gender, Ethnic Background and Program Level of ABE Students

Program & Level	Gender, Ethnic Background and Program Level of ABE Participants										
	American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Black not of Hispanic Origin		Hispanic		White not of Hispanic Origin		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Beg. ABE	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	1.1%	>1%	1.9%	1.4%	6.3%
Beg. ESL	>1%	>1%	4.2%	6.2%	>1%	>1%	17.7%	14.6%	>1%	>1%	44.3%
Int ABE	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	1.3%	>1%	2.0%	1.4%	>1%	>1%	8.0%
Int ESL	>1%	>1%	4.0%	5.1%	>1%	>1%	8.6%	7.1%	>1%	>1%	26.3%
Adv ESL	>1%	>1%	2.2%	2.3%	>1%	>1%	3.5%	3.0%	>1%	>1%	12.1%
Adult Sec.	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	3.0%
Total	>1%	>1%	11.4%	14.5%	2.4%	1.4%	33.8%	27.4%	4.3%	4.5%	100%

N = 81,518
Missing N = 8,403

CASAS, 1991

Provider Type and Program Level

The majority (75.1%) of learners in this 321 adult basic education population were enrolled in classes at Adult Schools (ADT). Of the remaining 24.9 percent, 12.7 attended Community Colleges (CC), 4.1 percent attended classes at Correctional Institutions (CORR), 3.9 percent attended classes at Community Based Organizations (CBO) and 4.2 percent attended classes in Other settings--including Literacy Programs (0.9%), California Youth Authority (1.4%) and Hospitals (1.9%).

A summary of the number of students attending the types and levels of adult basic classes by provider type is presented in Table 3. The majority (58,263) of students attended ESL classes at Adult Schools (ADT). Adult Schools were also the provider for more than seven thousand (7,405) students in ABE and other programs. Community College Districts (CCD) provided ESL classes to 9,620 students and nearly 1,500 (1,468) students in ABE and other programs. The remaining 10,453 students for whom data are available attended the various classes provided by the remaining five provider types.

Table 3 - Program Level and Provider Type by Numbers of ABE Students

Provider Type

Program	ADT	CBO	CCD	LIT	CYA	CORR	HOS	Total
ESL Pre Beg	6041	367	669	46	1	162	3	7,289
ESL Beg	25,095	916	4,365	150	26	659	2	31,213
ESL Int	18,205	983	3,317	111	36	142	2	22,796
ESL Adv	8,922	82	1,269	153	25	72	1	10,524
ABE Beg	2,515	188	398	122	160	641	1,448	5,472
ABE Int	1,937	99	465	52	122	787	118	3,580
ABE Adv	1,580	49	445	56	481	741	56	3,408
High School	520	25	75	11	149	91	0	871
GED	363	690	39	1	1	306	12	1,412
Pre Empl/VESL	188	19	17	0	0	0	0	224
Other	302	53	29	1	0	12	23	420
Total	65,668	3,471	11,088	703	1,001	3,613	1,665	87,209

Missing N = 2,712

CASAS, 1991

ADT - Adult School
CBO - Community Based Organization
CCD - Community College District
LIT - Literacy Program
CYA - California Youth Authority
CORR - California Dept. of Corrections
HOS - California State Hospitals

Descriptive Classroom Data

The ABE Class and Student Questionnaires are submitted with the return of a set of answer sheets to CASAS. Data collected on these forms include the primary teaching setting and time of day classes meet, class size, tutorial hours, instructional aide hours, and the approximate percent of instructional class time spent in instructional areas.

Results from the analysis of ABE Class/Student Questionnaires for 1990-91 are similar to class questionnaire data reported for more than five years. The number of classes reporting has increased steadily from 1,250 in 1986-87 to 2,715 in 1990-91. The mean class size has increased since 1986-87, with 1990-91 approximating 1988-89 the peak year to date for mean number of students (27.6). For those classes having an aide, the total number of aide hours has averaged from two to 3.8 hours per week. The time of day classes met is reported for the first time. In 1990-91, more than one-half (54%) were daytime classes, 46 percent were held in the evening.

A slight decrease in the mean percent of Life Skills taught compared to prior years was identified. Compared to 1989-90, the percentage of Language and Computation skills increased with corresponding decreases in Life and Other Skills. The most notable change from 1989-90 was in the Other Skills category. The attrition rate of students exiting class prior to post-test in 1990-91 was 44.8 percent, slightly higher than the previous year and the highest reported in the last five years.

The most profound changes were noted in "Reasons for Attending School" where a marked decrease was noted in the mean percentage of 321 students attending for "Education" or to "Function Better". There was nearly a ten percent increase (9.5%) in the percentage of 321 students whose enrollment was "Mandated" and a 30.2 percent increase in the mean percentage of students attending school to "Get a Job" (see Table 4).

Table 4 - Five Year Class Questionnaire Summary, ABE and ESL 1987 through 1991

	86-87	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91
Number of Classes Reporting	1,250	1,312	1,566	1,879	2,715
Mean Number of Students at Post-Test (Class Size)	22.0	23.7	27.6	24.6	27.1
Mean Weekly Number of:					
Aide Hours	3.3	3.5	2.0	3.8	3.7
Teacher Aide	2.1	2.2	1.3	2.5	2.4
Clerical Aide	1.2	1.3	0.7	1.3	1.3
Mean Percent of Skills Taught:					
Life Skills	41.2%	41.7%	41.7%	41.8%	40.4%
Language Skills	47.9%	47.3%	44.3%	42.4%	43.7%
Computation Skills	6.3%	6.3%	6.1%	5.9%	6.2%
Other Skills	4.6%	4.6%	7.9%	9.9%	9.7%
Mean Percent of Reason for Attending School:					
For More Education	20.8%	23.3%	16.9%	23.2%	13.8%
To Get a Job	37.6%	33.2%	21.1%	11.8%	42.0%
To Function Better	41.6%	40.5%	29.3%	43.4%	13.0%
Mandated	N/A	3.5%	32.7%	21.7%	31.2%
Percent Students Leaving Class Before Post-Test Administration	42.4%	40.8%	38.6%	44.4%	44.8%

CASAS, 1991

REASON FOR ENROLLMENT

The reason for entering a 321 program is recorded on the answer sheet at pre-test time in one of four categories including Education, Personal/Communication, Mandated and Job. Education indicates that students are working towards diplomas or the GED; Personal/Communication for students enrolled for enrichment purposes; Mandated for students in special programs such as welfare reform (GAIN) or amnesty (IRCA); and Job for students who aspire to obtain either a job or a job promotion.

As presented in Figure 8, Job attainment or promotion was recorded as the major reason for enrollment by 42 percent of the adult basic education students. Slightly more than 31 percent (31.2%) were participants of special programs such as welfare reform (GAIN) and Mandated to attend a 321 program. Thirteen percent enrolled for Personal/Communication purposes and another 13.8 percent were working toward an educational goal such as obtaining a diploma or the GED and recorded Education as the major reason for entering the program.

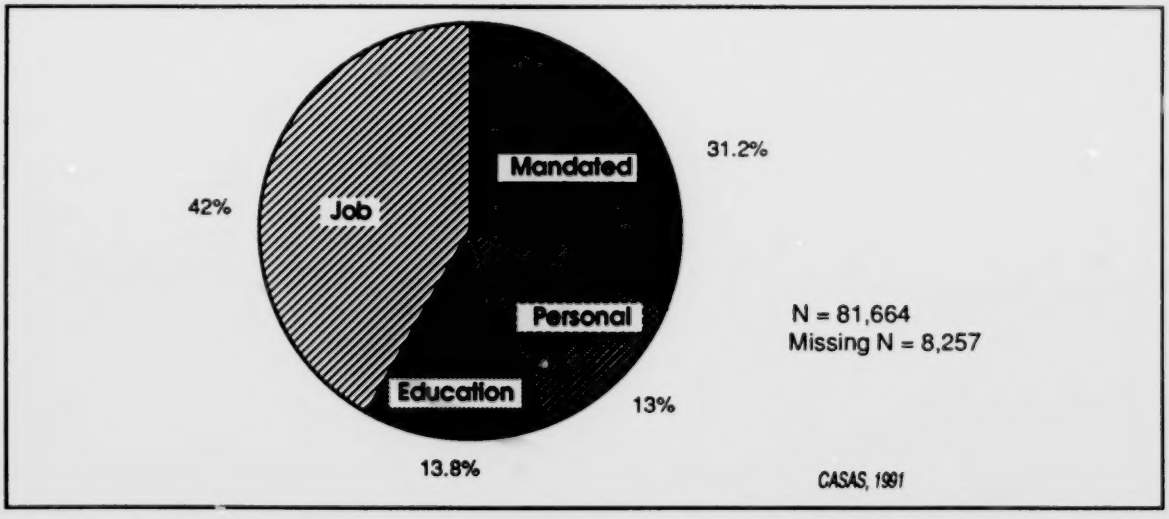


Figure 8 - Reason for Enrollment of Adult Basic Education Students

STUDENT GOAL ATTAINMENT

Goal attainment data identifies the total number of students retained in ABE/321 programs including those who changed their class or program. Four categories describing the means of achieving personal goals are reported including Entered Job Training; Got a Job/Better Job; Entered College; and Personal/Communication. Additionally, six categories of Barriers to Education are identified for students who leave the program prior to post-testing and have not met personal goals. These Barriers to Education categories include Transportation; Child Care; Health/Family Problems; Changed Work Time; Moved; and Other. In the absence of information, the Unknown category is used.

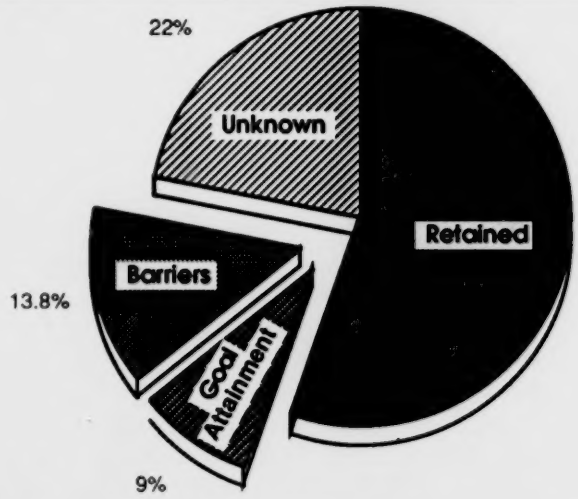
Figure 9a. provides a composite of the four categories of Goal Attainment data. More than 55 percent (55.2%) of the students for whom data are available were retained in the program or changed class or program. Nearly 14 percent (13.8%) reported a barrier to education of some kind and nine percent attained one of the four goal categories. Information was unknown for 22 percent of the adult basic education students responding to this section of the answer sheet.

Figure 9b. segregates the 6,599 students who cited attainment of goals. The majority (42.4%) of the students who reported that they attained a goal, indicated that they attained a Personal/Communication goal. Nearly one-third (32.3%) Got a Job and 18.8 percent Entered Job Training. The remaining 6.5 percent Entered College.

Finally, Figure 9c. portrays the 10,172 students who cited a Barrier to Education. Approximately 38 percent (37.8%) Moved; 24.4 percent Changed Work Time; and nearly 14 percent cited either Health/Family (13.9%) or Other (13.7%) barriers to education. Less than six percent (5.9%) cited Child Care and 4.2 percent reported Transportation barriers.

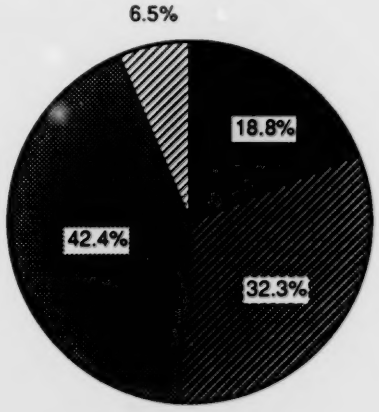
Figure 9 - Adult Basic Education Goal Attainment Composite

Figure 9a.



N = 73,480
Missing N = 16,441

Figure 9b.

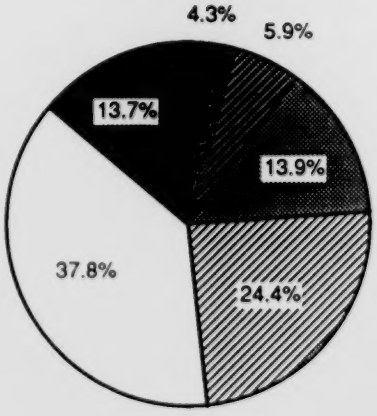


Attained Goal

- Entered Job Training
- Got a Job
- Personal/Comm.
- Entered College

N = 6,599

Figure 9c.



Barriers to Education

- Transportation
- Child Care
- Health/Family
- Changed Work Time
- Moved
- Other

N = 10,172

CASAS, 1991

GOAL ATTAINMENT BY REASON FOR ENROLLMENT

Tables 5 and 6 present the various categories of Goal Attainment by Reason For Enrollment. Table 5 expresses the relationship between these two variables expressed in numbers of students. All Programs, Program Levels, Classes and Students are presented for all Goal Attainment categories including Retained in Program, Changed Program, Goal Attainment, Barriers to Education and Unknown.

Table 5 - Goal Attainment by Reason for Enrollment 1990-91
Summary of Numbers of Students, All Classes

Program: ABE/ESL
Level: A/B/C
Number of Students: 68,217

	JOB	EDUCATION	PERSONAL	MANDATED
RETAINED				
Retained In Program	15,046	4,920	4,645	10,938
Changed Program	871	344	309	952
GOAL ATTAINMENT				
Entered Job Training	215	253	238	472
Got A Job/Better Job	509	117	604	707
Entered College	95	12	30	260
Personal/Communication	1,691	155	182	515
BARRIERS TO EDUCATON				
Transportation	169	37	48	155
Child Care	273	39	85	162
Health/Family Problems	541	221	147	404
Changed Work Time	1,003	160	439	698
Moved	1,277	731	294	1,306
Other	500	211	139	398
UNKNOWN	6,518	1,374	2,225	4,592

CASAS, 1991

REASONS FOR LEAVING ABE/321 PROGRAMS

Table 6 presents the relationship between Goal Attainment and Reason for Enrollment expressed in percentages of students for whom either Goal Attainment or Barriers to Education data were available. Retained students, those with missing data or otherwise unknown are excluded. For each Reason for Enrollment, the majority of those reporting cited a Barrier to Education of some kind. Students enrolled for Education reported the highest percentage (72.3%) of Barriers followed by Mandated (61.4%); Job (60.0%); and Personal/Communication (52.2%).

Table 6 - Percent of ABE Students Reporting Goal Attainment or Barriers by Reason For Enrollment

Reason For Leaving	Reason For Enrollment: Job	Education	Personal/ Comm.	Mandated
Goal Attainment	40.0%	27.7%	47.8%	38.6%
Barriers to Education	60.0%	72.3%	52.2%	61.4%
	N = 6,273 100%	N = 1,936 100%	N = 2,206 100%	N = 5,068 100%

CASAS, 1991

ATTRITION PILOT STUDY

Unlike traditional educational programs serving children, adult education programs see many of their students leave. Some adult students leave programs as a result of meeting short term and/or specific goals while others leave because of problems which preclude their continuing in the program. The CASAS Goal Attainment Survey Results for the 1989-90 321 adult basic education population indicated that nearly 31 percent of the students left the program for various reasons, most of which were unknown.

Study Objectives

In order to capture current and accurate information regarding those adult basic education students in California who leave the program due to specific barriers, Project Goal 1.9 established the primary objective of conducting a pilot study to obtain data on student attrition as related to pre-test scores and demographics. A secondary objective was to determine the actual costs to agencies and the processes needed to conduct such follow-up studies.

Site Selection

The site selection process attempted adequate representation of students in terms of geographic location (urban/suburban/rural), size and type of agency (Adult School, Community College, Community Based Organization) program type (ABE/ESL) and ethnic diversity. Interviews were conducted by trained clerical staff or instructional aide at each of the five participating local sites using the Goal Attainment Section of the Answer Sheet. Modeled telephone training and materials were provided in order to standardize the data collection process.

Sample Methodology

Class records at each site were used to identify students who had been absent three or more consecutive weeks. Sites were asked to sample by program, level and time of day in an attempt to obtain a representative sample. Larger programs were instructed to sample every third class and third student within the class and smaller programs to contact every student leaving early. All students selected for this sample were Fall 1990 enrollees. Scan Option One answer sheets were used to record student responses.

An attempt was made to obtain data from a sample of approximately 550 students who were pre-tested only. These students, who are a subset of the larger population referred to elsewhere in this report, had 100 hours or less of instruction and were not present at post-testing time. Students were contacted by means of a telephone or personal follow up interview. Those retained in the program (N=47) and those students not able to be contacted (N=105) have been excluded in the narrative and graphic presentations below. In other words, the following represents the 243 students successfully contacted.

Demographic Profile

More than half (54.1%) of the students in this sample were Female, and 45.9 percent Male. Greater than three-fourths (75.3%) of the adult basic education students in this sample were ages 19 through 40 and most of these (40.9%) in the 22-30 age category. An examination of adult student ages at the upper and lower limits of the range, yields information that nearly one-quarter (22.9%) were age 21 and younger and 17.5 percent age 41 and older.

Ethnic Background data indicates that 60.3 percent of the adult students in this sample were Hispanic; 17.7 percent Asian; and 9.5 percent Black. Less than five percent (4.7%) were White; 3.9 percent Indo-Chinese; and 1.3 percent Filipino. The additional ethnic categories included Pacific Islander, Alaskan/American Indian and Other. These categories together represented the ethnic background of only 2.6 percent of the total sample.

The majority of students in this sample (60.6%) identified Spanish as their native language. English was identified as the native language of 11.0 percent; Chinese 10.2 percent; Vietnamese 3.4 percent; and Korean 2.1 percent. The remaining eight language categories and Other accounted for the remaining 12.7 percent of the native languages identified by adult basic education students in this sample.

Educational Profile

The majority (65.5%) of students in this 321 adult student sample completed less than 12 years of school in the U.S. or another country, 9.5 percent of whom reported that they completed 3 or fewer years of school. Approximately 21 percent reported completing each of the 4-6, 7-9 years of school completed categories and 14.2 percent completed 10-11 years. Nearly 31 percent (30.9%) completed 12 or more years of school, 13.2 percent of those completed 13 and more.

The majority of students in this sample (55.6%) reported that they had not earned a diploma or degree of any kind and nearly 45 percent (44.4%) reported earning a diploma or degree. In the latter category, less than one percent (.9%) reported earning a GED; 29.7 percent a High School Diploma; and 13.8 reported either a Technical, AA, 4 Year College or Other diploma or degree.

Reason for Enrollment

Compared to the majority (73.2%) of students in the larger 321 population enrolled in adult basic education classes for Job or Mandated reasons, most (82.5%) of the students in this sample were enrolled either for Educational (36.5%) or Personal/Communication (46.0%) reasons. Only 3.2 percent were enrolled because they were Mandated to do so and 14.3 percent enrolled to get a Job or improve their job situation.

Reasons for Leaving

A small number of students (N=41) left the program because they attained their goal. The remaining students did not attain their goal but rather left for other reasons. Of the 348 adult students who left because of Barriers, interviewers were able to contact nearly 70 percent (69.8%) of them. The 243 students who were contacted identified their reason for leaving the program in one of six categories including Transportation, Child Care, Health/Family Problems, Changed Work Time, Moved and Other. Three categories, namely Health/Family Problems, Changed Work Time or Moved were each cited as the reason for leaving by approximately 29 percent of the students. The remaining 13.1 percent identified various reasons including Transportation, Child Care and Other (see Figure 10).

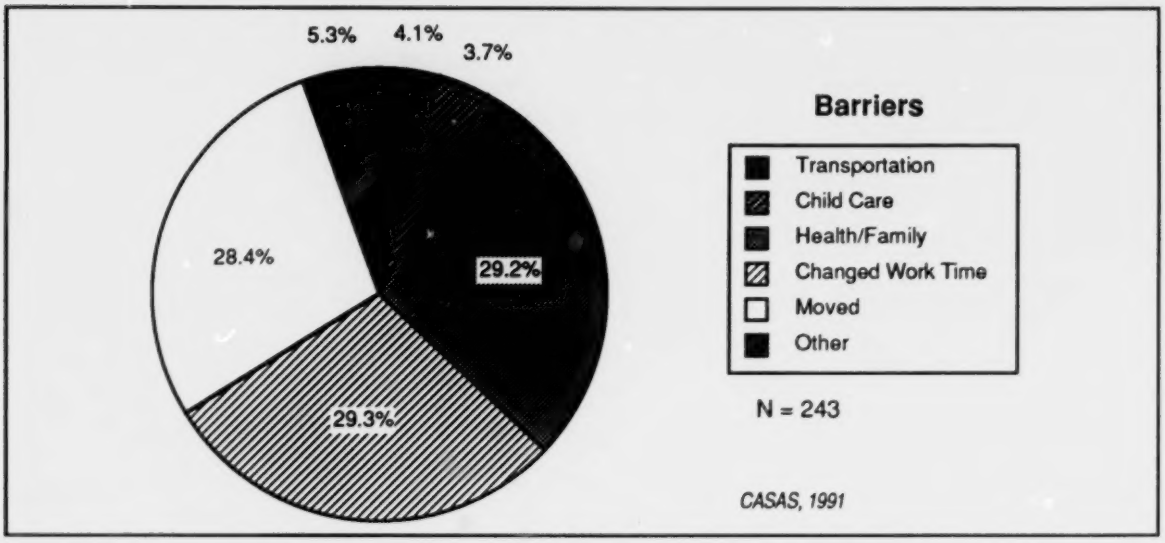


Figure 10 - Attrition Pilot Study Barriers to Education

Pre-Test Scores

Project Goal 1.9 further established the objective of pairing the results of the questionnaire with pre-test scores. Analysis of the relationship between test score performance and barriers to education has been excluded because test score data were available for less than one hundred students in this sample--making the paired data less than meaningful for purposes of analysis and extrapolation to the larger adult basic education population.

Follow-up Studies

A secondary objective identified in Project Goal 1.9, was to determine the actual costs to agencies and the processes needed to conduct such follow-up studies. The difficulty in successfully contacting students by telephone after they leave the program is evidenced in this pilot study. The processes needed to conduct follow-up studies are fairly straightforward and would essentially be those described above with site or district specific modification as appropriate. It is more difficult, however, to clearly identify associated costs as these would be contingent upon several factors.

The calculation of follow-up study costs would need to incorporate variables such as the site-specific attrition rate; the hourly rate of the person(s) making the follow-up contacts; whether follow-up tasks were routinely incorporated into existing work flow or initiated as a special project.

Chapter Four

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS

Consistent use of data collection instruments and methodology over an extended period of time provides the opportunity to standardize data collection procedures, establish patterns of performance and identify potential anomalies with a given population or sample. The CASAS system which has these capabilities has focused on student achievement and progress. Learner progress in both ESL and ABE programs has been the primary variable reported by CASAS for more than a decade.

Since 1980, CASAS standardized data collection instruments have provided consistent indicators of achievement and progress at the student, class, agency and statewide levels. Access to a standardized database also facilitates comparative analysis within and between groups. Local agencies can analyze their agency data relative to statewide data and state and local agencies have the ability to compare achievement and progress in different programs and populations. These comparisons provide insight into the statewide population of adult learners.

A uniform sampling plan and procedures is needed to achieve standardized data collection. A committee representing the California Department of Education, CASAS, Adult Education, Community Colleges, Literacy Programs and Correctional Institutions achieved consensus regarding sampling design and guidelines and completed a sampling plan in August, 1989. As a result, more than 70,000 answer sheets were returned to CASAS in 1989-90, representing a significant increase over the number received for the prior academic year.

In 1990-91, based on new sampling guidelines, data were derived from nearly 90,000 (89,921) student answer sheets. Summary demographic and educational data were presented in Chapter Three. In satisfaction of Project Goal 1.7, this chapter reports

both pre-test score performance and pre-post progress. Demographic and other characteristics associated with student progress are also presented.

MEAN PRE-TEST SCORE PERFORMANCE

One of the patterns identified by CASAS in the last decade is that learners enrolled in ESL classes consistently score lower on pre-tests than learners enrolled in ABE classes. In 1989-90, the mean or average Reading pre-test score was 209.0 for ESL students while the average Reading pre-test score for ABE students was 221.1. This pattern was seen once again in 1990-91. The mean or average Reading pre-test score was 209.6 for ESL students compared to 220.1 for ABE students. Similarly, ESL students had lower mean Listening scores than ABE students both in the aggregate and at each Program Level (see Figures 11a. and 11b.).

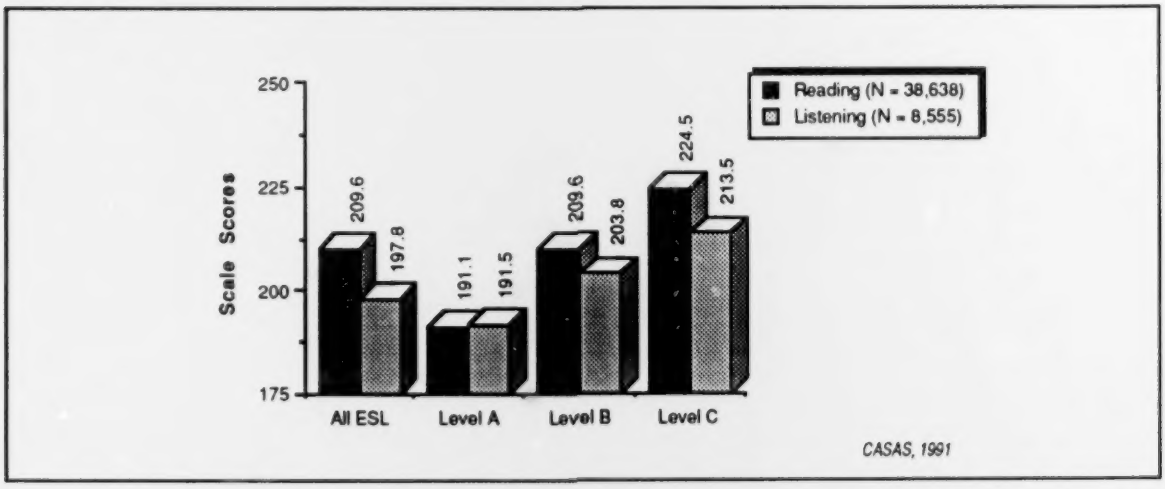


Figure 11a. - ESL Mean Reading and Listening Pre-Test Scores

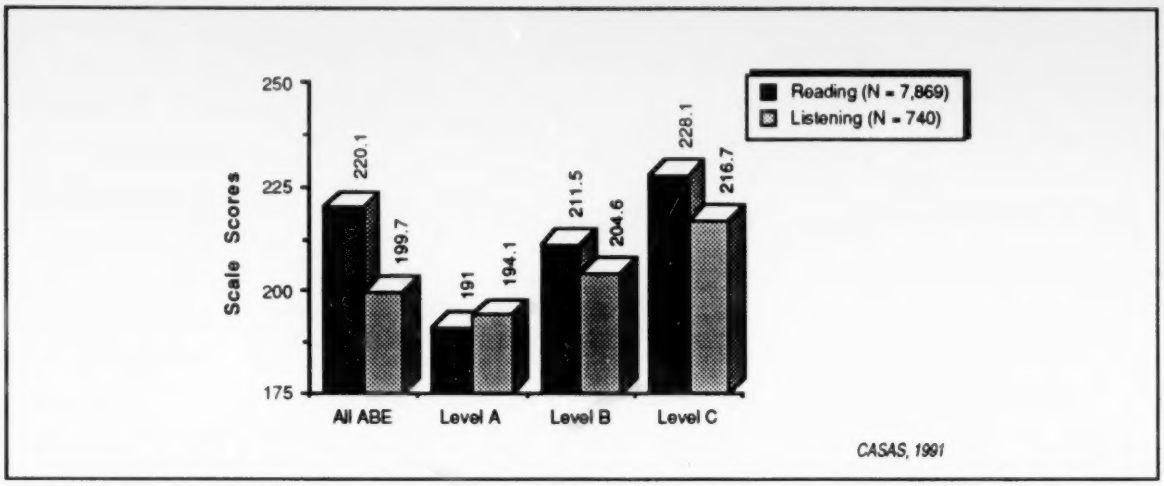


Figure 11b. - ABE Mean Reading and Listening Pre-Test Scores

READING PRE-TEST SCORES AND STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Ethnic Background

When analyzed by Ethnic Background, the pattern of consistently lower mean Reading pre-test scores for ESL compared to ABE students remained. Mean Reading pre-test scores for ESL students from all Ethnic Background categories ranged from 206.4 to 214.8, an 8.4 percentage point spread. By comparison, the ABE range of mean Reading pre-test scores was truncated to only 3.5 percentage points (218.6 to 222.1) and mean scores were higher than ESL in all Ethnic Background categories. Asians had the smallest difference (6.3) in mean ESL test scores compared to ABE test scores and Blacks the greatest difference (13.8) (see Figures 12a. and 12b.).

Native Language

Native language data and mean Reading pre-test scores were also analyzed. Once again, the pattern continued with mean ABE Reading pre-test scores higher than mean ESL scores in all language categories. Mean Reading pre-test scores for ESL students ranged from 211.0 to 214.6 and for ABE from 216.8 to 224.5. Native Japanese speakers had the smallest difference with a mean ESL Reading pre-test score of 224.4 and an ABE mean Reading pre-test score of 225.6. Native Hmong speakers had the greatest difference with a mean ESL pre-test score of 202.3 and an ABE mean Reading pre-test score of 218.8 (see Figures 13a. and b.).

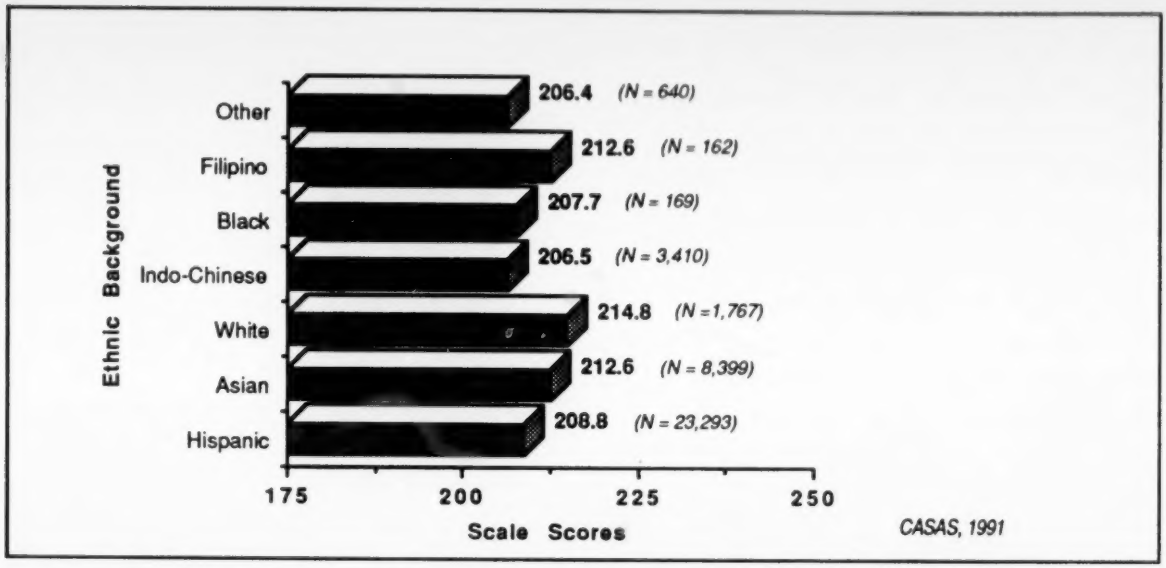


Figure 12a. - ESL Mean Reading Pre-Test Scores by Ethnic Background

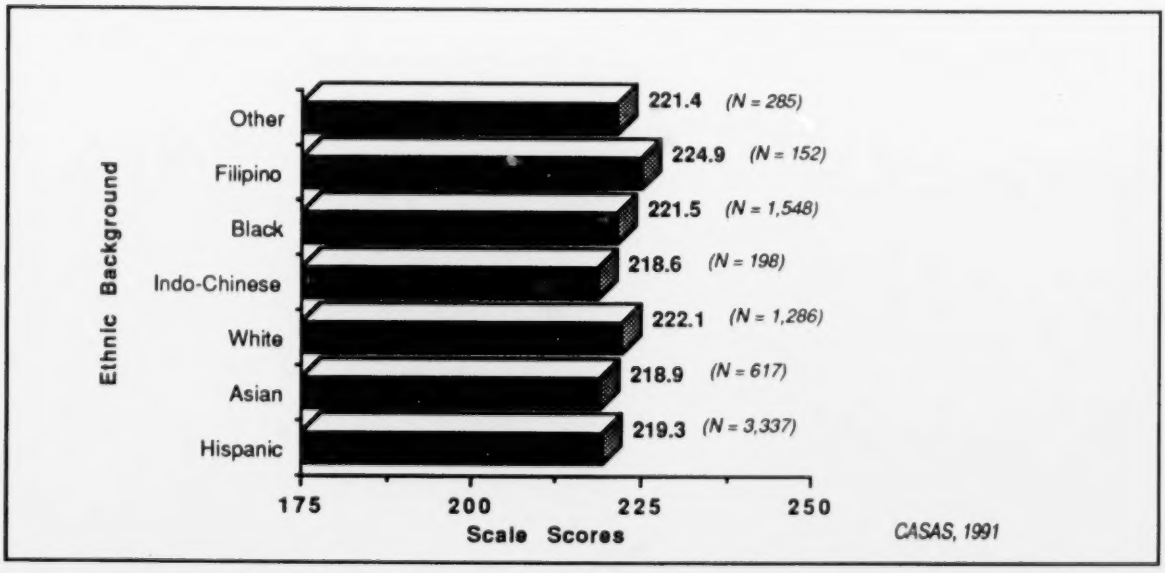


Figure 12b. - ABE Mean Reading Pre-Test Scores by Ethnic Background

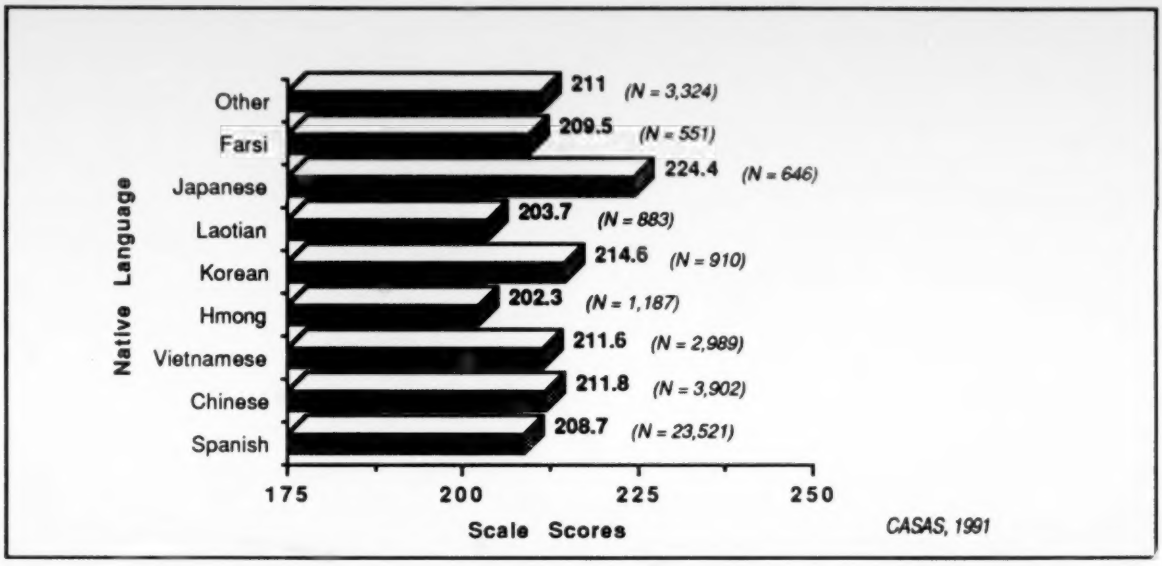


Figure 13a. - ESL Mean Reading Pre-Test Scores by Native Language

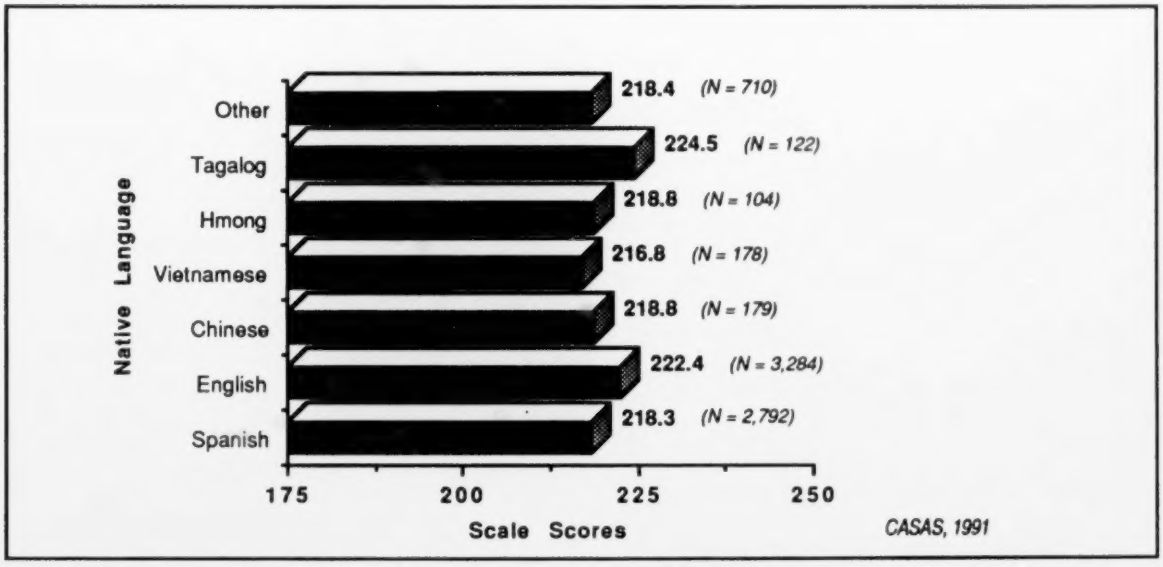


Figure 13b. - ABE Mean Reading Pre-Test Scores by Native Language

Goal Attainment

Finally, mean Reading pre-test scores were analyzed by the various Goal Attainment categories. Mean ESL scores ranged from 208.3 to 220.9 and the ABE range was 213.1 to 229.9. While mean Reading pre-test scores were once again higher for ABE students in each Goal Attainment category, further analysis revealed some

interesting phenomena. For both ABE and ESL, mean scores were lowest for students who identified a Transportation Barrier and highest for students who reported attaining their goal to Enter College. The distribution of mean scores within each program was similar. The highest mean pre-test scores were students who "Entered College", 220.9 for ESL and 229.9 for ABE students. Students who "Entered Job Training" had the second highest mean Reading pre-test scores.

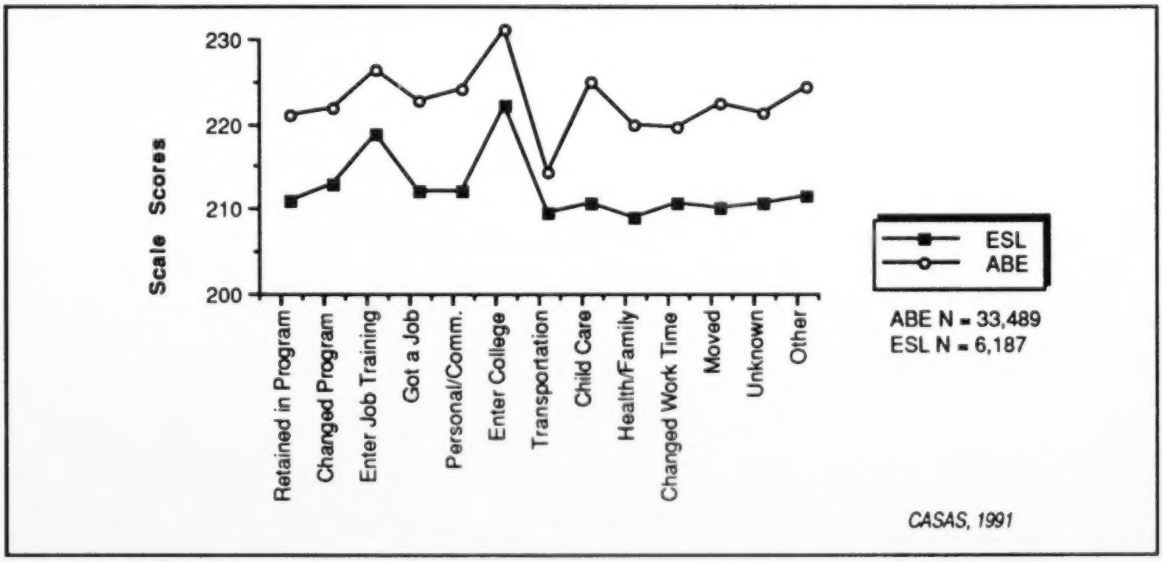


Figure 14 - ESL and ABE Mean Reading Pre-Test Scores by Goal Attainment

ANNUAL STATEWIDE PRE-POST ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

Adult Basic Education (ABE, ESL, Special Education) programs receiving federal ABE Section 321 monies must submit annual CASAS Achievement Test pre and post-test data for adult ABE and ESL students enrolled during the Fall semester. Sampling options were provided to 321 Funded Agencies for implementation of the mandated pre and post-testing integral to the new ABE accountability system. These options were based on the type of population served, program delivery, type of program, ability levels and student goals.

Recommended hours between pre and post-testing were developed in 1989-90. These options represented minimal standards for ABE pre-post testing. Agencies must minimally pre-test a representative sampling of enrolled students during the first month of the Fall semester and post-test those that remain in the program for

80 to 100 hours of instruction. Guidelines for testing and reporting were provided in the 321 Administration Manual and reviewed in training sessions.

Four options of answer sheets were developed in order to accommodate the variety of scanners used throughout the state and a post- test item response was added to all answer sheets to allow pre and post- testing of students on the same form. Agencies were requested to mail all test data, including the Goal Attainment Survey to CASAS by March 31, 1991.

Comparative Data

As discussed earlier, consistency in data collection methodologies for learner progress provides the ability to locate significant changes within adult education programs. The mean adult learner progress in ABE and ESL, for example, remained constant (gains within one scale point) from 1985 to 1989. Another trend has been established, namely the steady increase in the number of paired scores collected statewide from 1985-1991. In 1990-91, the number of paired data increased another six percent, representing 24 percent of the population.

With the significant increase in the number of answer sheets received from 70,873 in 1989-90 to 89,921 in 1990-91, efforts were made to capture a greater number of paired data for reporting purposes. Use of both scale scores within the accurate range and raw score data obtained from item responses on the answer sheet permitted analysis of the pre-post progress sample to include both those within the defined accurate range on pre and post-tests as well as those who "topped out" of the post-test.

Mean Pre-Post Reading Progress Scores by Program and Level

Mean Reading pre-post progress scores are provided below for both ESL and ABE students by Program and Level at 81-120 Hours of Instruction. The overall mean post-test score for ESL students was 213.9 compared to 213.8 in 1989-90. For ABE students the overall mean post-test score dropped from 224.2 in 1989-90 to 222.7. Net progress from pre to post-test was similar to prior years at Level C for both ESL and ABE students (see Figures 15a. and 15b.).

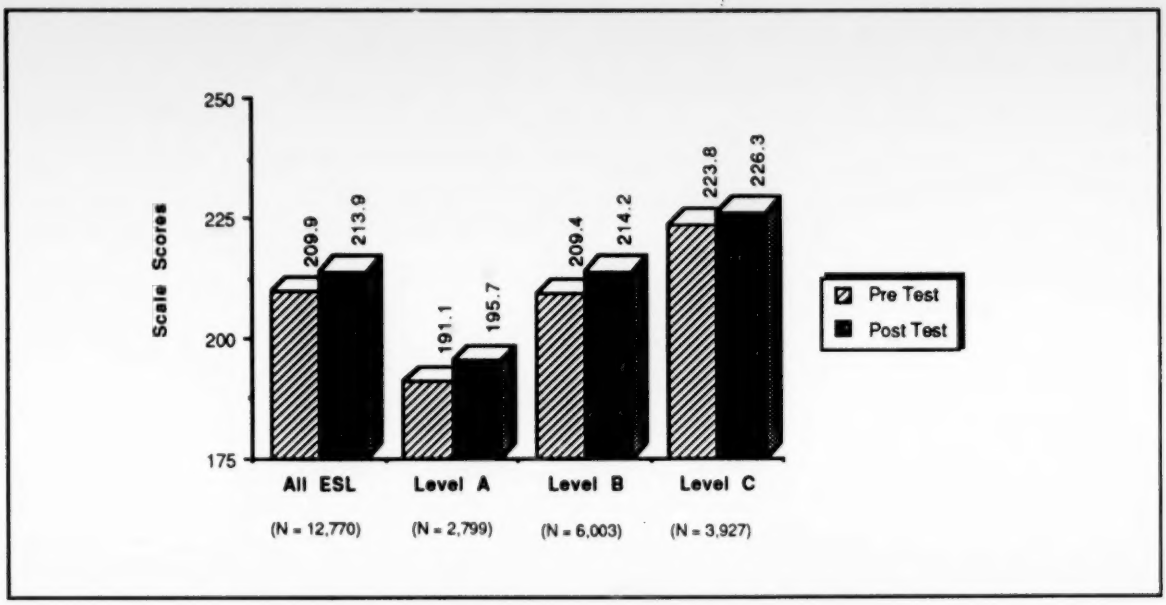


Figure 15a. - ESL Mean Pre-Post Reading Progress

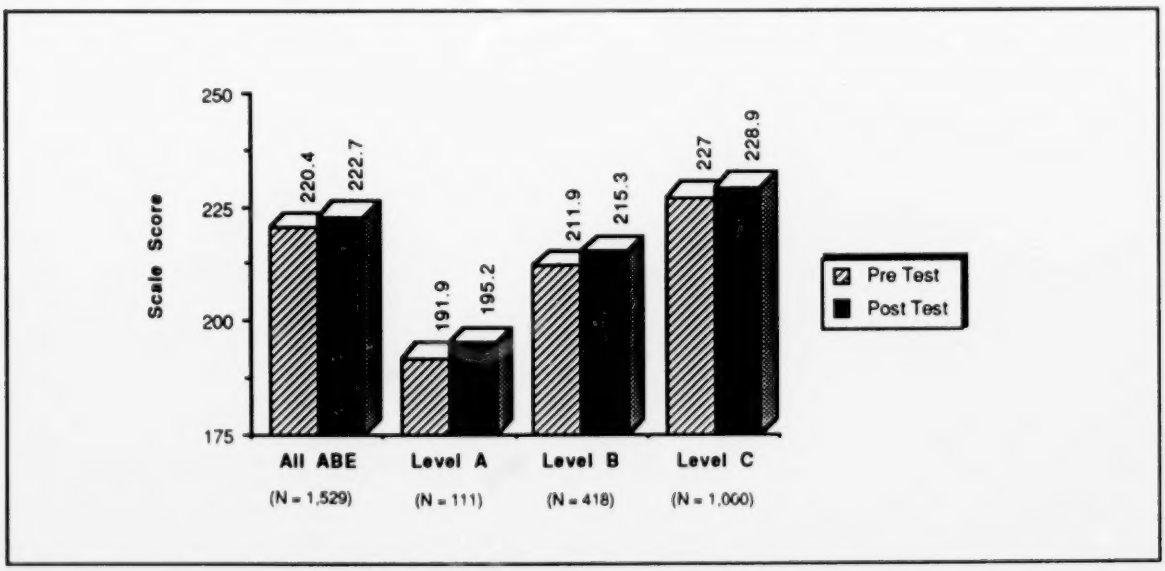


Figure 15b. - ABE Mean Pre-Post Reading Progress

Mean Pre-Post Listening Progress Scores

Figures 16a. and b. present the overall mean pre-post Listening progress scores both overall and for ABE and ESL Levels A and B at 81-120 hours of instruction. Level C data has been excluded due to limited data and caution is advised in interpreting the ABE Listening data as the reported Ns are small. The overall mean pre-post progress gain was 5.4 for ESL students and 6.3 for ABE. Level A mean scores were higher for ABE students and pre-post progress for both groups flattened out at Level B.

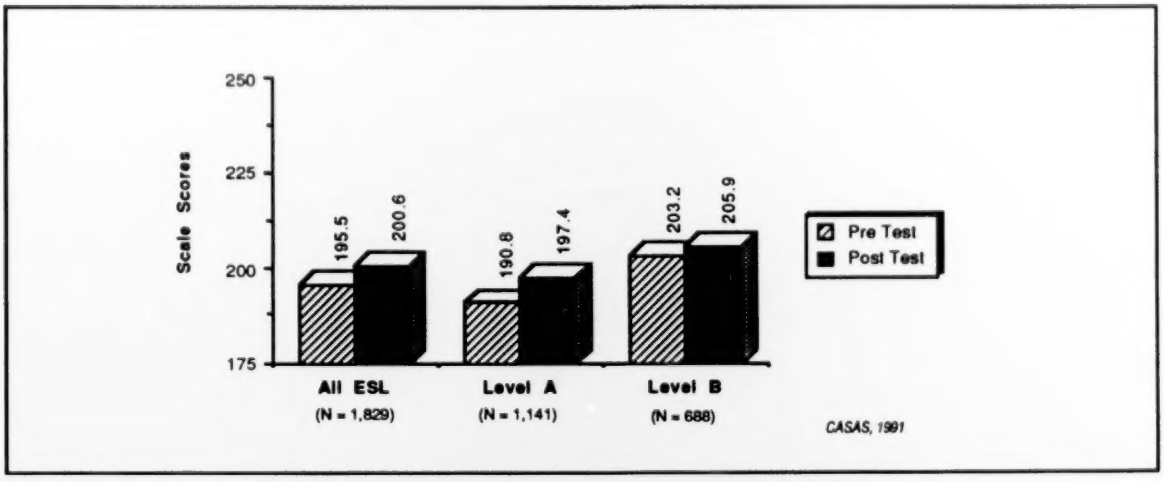


Figure 16a. - ESL Mean Pre-Post Listening Progress

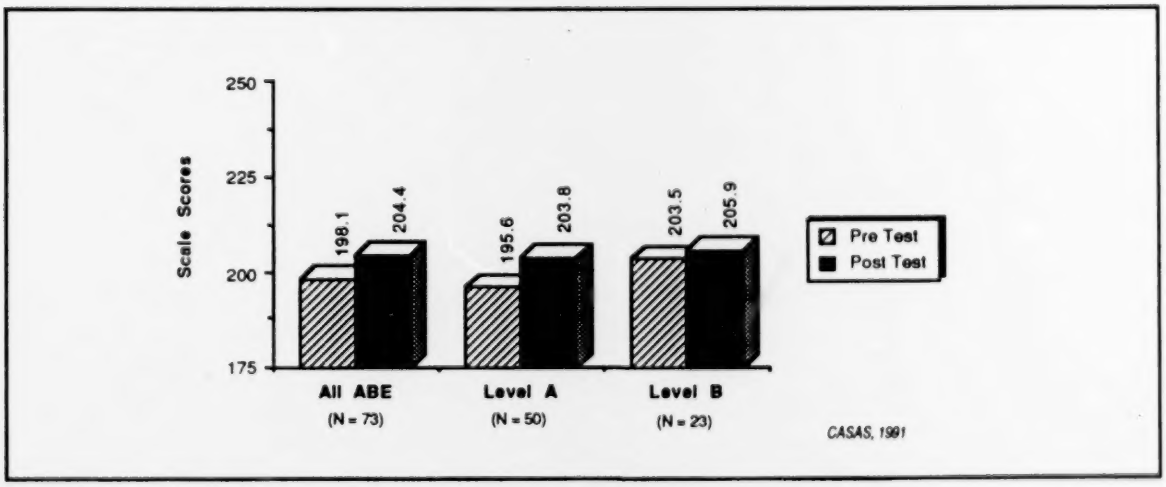


Figure 16b. - ABE Mean Pre-Post Listening Progress

Pre-Post Reading Progress by Years of School Completed

Data were analyzed to determine the extent to which prior schooling might be used as an indicator of pre-post progress. While a relationship between years of school completed and test score performance has been demonstrated over time, this relationship was not exhibited relative to years of school completed and pre-post progress results. The pre-post progress for ESL students who completed 3 or fewer years of school was 2.8 and for the remaining years of school completed categories ranged from 3.9 to 4.8. For ABE students, the relationship between pre-post progress and Years of School Completed was virtually flat. ABE pre-post progress ranged from 2.1 to 2.7 with minimal difference regardless of the numbers of years of school completed.

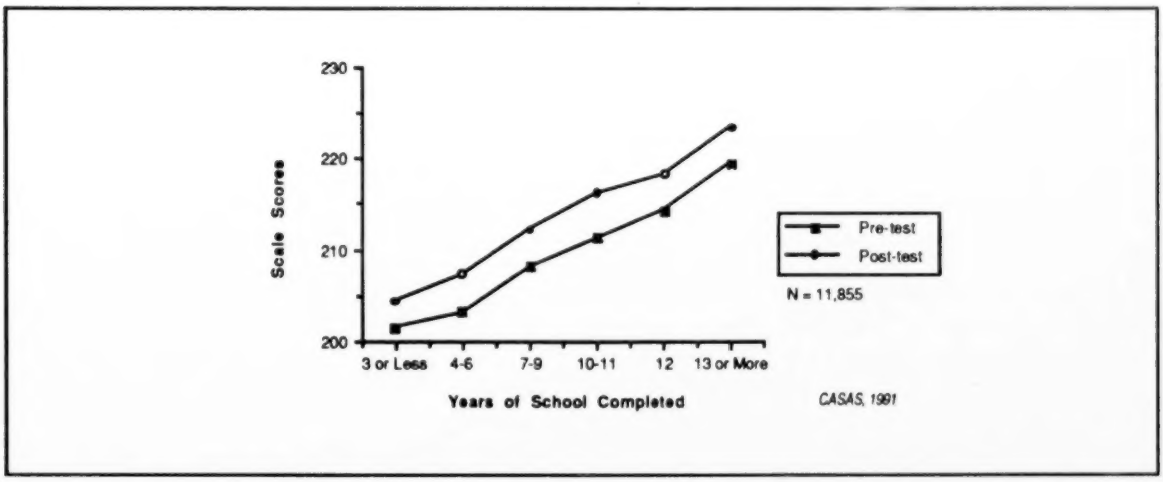


Figure 17a. - ESL Mean Pre-Post Reading Progress by Years of School Completed

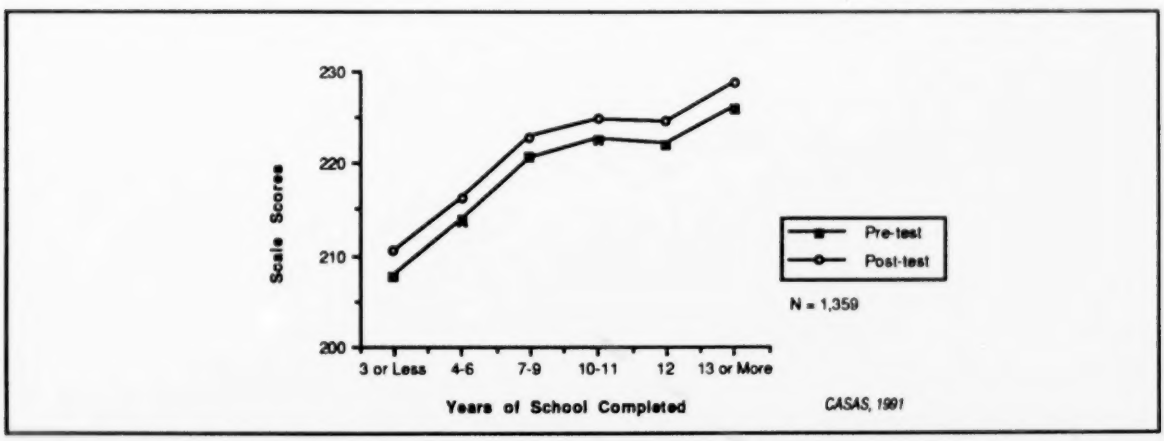


Figure 17b. - ABE Mean Pre-Post Reading Progress by Years of School Completed

Chapter Five

GOAL ATTAINMENT: OTHER PROJECT GOALS

SAMPLING GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

In partial satisfaction of Project Goal 1.2, sampling guidelines and requirements were published and disseminated in the 321 Administration Manual. The new state sampling design and data collection process provided several sampling design options to 321 Agencies for implementation of the mandated ABE Pre and Post-Testing. The guidelines represented minimal standards for testing and agencies were encouraged to assess all students whenever possible. The guidelines were designed to facilitate administration, scoring and interpretation and provide useful information at the local agency level.

Sampling recommendations addressing responsibilities of the three entities involved in testing and data collection were delineated. Guidelines were provided in the following categories:

- Curriculum Areas and Levels for Pre and Post-Testing for 1990-91;
- Recommend Hours between Pre-Post Testing;
- Pre-Post Options;
- Pre-Post Options, Calendar and Protocol for Special Education; and
- Other Recommended Guidelines.

Representative sample was defined as including students from all 321 Funded programs (ABE/ESL), levels (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, Special Education), and times (morning, afternoon, evening). Complete "Guidelines for Sampling Design 1990-91" are found in the 321 Administration Manual.

AGENCY SERVICES

Project Goals 1.1 through 1.3 call for expansion of annual pre-post achievement testing and additional student goal attainment to newly funded ABE programs served by the Adult Education Unit including those grantees under Section 372 English Literacy Program. CASAS staff responsible for all training and technical assistance in the areas of test administration, scoring and reporting to federally funded ABE programs in California provided outreach and training to new agencies as described below.

Materials

CASAS 321 Manual

The 321 Manual was updated prior to Fall trainings in accordance with the program objectives established for the 1990-91 academic year and will be further updated to reflect changes in data collection and sampling. The manual's purpose is to assure uniformity in testing and sampling procedures. The materials included in the manual are components of the wider system of assessment instruments developed by CASAS. The manual provides complete information for accountability including the administration and scoring of CASAS tests and Guidelines for pre-post testing in the accurate ranges. Materials provided facilitate the standardization of testing and the data collection process. The loose leaf design of the manual once again allows for insertion of revisions and/or additions as needed. Timely distribution ensures that all agencies have the requisite resources to achieve continued accountability reporting requirements. The California Department of Education has included in the CASAS/353 Budget the provision of a specified number of tests, answer sheets and a 321 Testing Manual to each funded agency.

CASAS Appraisals and Other Resource Materials

In addition to the updated 321 Administration Manual, each agency received a CASAS Competency List and Curriculum Index and Matrix as delineated in the contract proposal. Other resource materials developed by CASAS included the Fall Training Packet and a variety of announcements and reminders.

Scannable answer sheets were developed with four options to match a variety of scanners. More than 100,000 answer sheets were shipped to approximately 245 sites throughout the state of California.

1990-91 Appraisal and Placement instruments included:

Locator Tests - Reading Locator and/or an Appraisal Test for Placement. Levels A/B and A/B/C.

Reading Tests-Survey Achievement-Pre/Post with life skills content for ABE/ESL. Test Forms 31 through 36, Levels A, B and C.

D Level Reading Test to document learning gains beyond C Level.

Reading Tests-Focus on Employability Competencies-Pre/Post. Test Forms 11 through 16, Levels A, B and C.

Listening Tests-Survey Achievement-Pre/Post. Test Forms 5l through 56, Levels A, B and C.

Math Tests-Survey Achievement-Pre/Post with life skill content. Test Forms 31 through 36, Levels A, B and C.

Replacement Tests for Special Education. Test Forms 310-311; 320-321; 330-331, Levels AA, AAA, AAAA.

TRAINING

Project Goal 1.4 requires the initial training of all 321 Agencies, including technical assistance to new agencies under Section 372, as required to administer, score, interpret and report the data at the local program level in an effective manner. Regional trainings were held in Fall at various sites throughout California. The sampling design changes discussed above necessitated all test coordinators to attend CASAS Pre-Post Test Training. This training was originally scheduled via teleconference at 18 downlink sites utilizing testing materials which would have been made available prior to the teleconference. The teleconference was not able to be conducted and subsequently rescheduled. Training sessions were conducted throughout the state during the week of September 10, 1990.

Following Fall training, training and technical assistance was provided by CASAS as needed by request from agencies. Follow-up pre-post test training sessions were conducted September 28 and October 5, 1990. A total of 248 participants were trained statewide. Training sessions covered the new sampling design guidelines and requirements, standards and appropriate timing for pre-post testing, the various scan options and instructions for completing data collection instruments. The Goal Attainment Survey, ordering of materials, number of free tests and important dates were also explained. Training sessions were supplemented with written materials alerting agencies of guidelines, time frames and deadlines for submission of materials.

Outreach and training to California Department of Corrections and Library Literacy Programs has been increased along with development of trainers in Corrections, Special Education, and the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). Thirteen sessions were held from October 1990 through June 7, 1991 at various locations. Topics included Assessment to Instruction and Assessment to Instruction for Special Education among others.

Training Evaluation

The opportunity was provided for attendees to critique the various training sessions and these data were collected for each Fall 1990 and subsequent trainings. A four-point ordinal category scale ranging from 1 (low) to 4 (high) was used to rate each

session in seven areas. Space was also provided on the evaluation form for open-ended comments and to indicate any additional training or technical assistance needs.

Each of eight content areas (Overall Training, Using Data, Ordering Materials, Sampling Design, Completing Demographic Information, Testing in Accurate Ranges, Test Administration and Pre-Post Testing) was presented at twelve sites with approximately 250 attendees rating each session. Evaluations were tabulated and a mean or average score derived. The results were quite favorable with overall mean or average scores ranging from 3.26 to 3.56 on the four point scale described above.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Project Goals 1.4 and 1.8 call for training and continuing technical assistance required to administer, score, interpret and report the data at the local program level in an effective manner. Technical assistance is provided by CASAS to all agencies through the cooperative services of CASAS and OTAN as requested. OTAN is designed to provide technical assistance, staff training and information to Adult Education providers (agencies). OTAN is implementing an electronic communication system for adult educators in California to electronically link the field with the California Department of Education and other major projects including CASAS. CASAS in cooperation with OTAN presented training at eleven sites in addition to the 321 trainings held during the week of September 10, 1990.

CASAS PRESENTATIONS

Project Goal 2.0 required the presentation of and training on the ABE Section 321 funded pre-post assessment project both within California and in other states as appropriate and requested by the California Department of Education. CASAS activities from July, 1990 to June, 1991 demonstrate a continued commitment both to project goals and to adult basic education. CASAS staff presented at nine national and state conferences including AAACE in Salt Lake City, TESOL in New York and CATESOL in California. Conference topics were diverse including corrections, homeless, GAIN, ESL, VESL, Employability and the Future of Assessment Trends and Technology.

QUALITY CONTROL PILOT STUDY

In an attempt to develop new guidelines and practices for test administration, scoring and storage, a study of quality control procedures of the assessment process in a sampling of six agencies was conducted. This data was also planned for use in managing instruction and program planning. Sites including adult schools, community colleges and a community based organization were part of a quality control pilot study. Testing procedures were observed in classes representing three levels each of ESL and ABE classes at these sites. A fourteen item open-ended observation questionnaire and procedures for administering it were developed to obtain the data regarding quality and security of assessment maintenance, as well as use of data at the classroom and program level.

The first question addressed adequacy of the physical environment used for testing purposes. For the most part, responses were favorable in terms of space, light and noise level. Two sites rated the allocated space as inadequate.

The remaining questions primarily addressed test administration, storage and the mode of provision of feedback, if any, to the students. Most observations suggested that instructions were written on the chalkboard and not routinely given verbally in English and Spanish. The test was introduced and explained adequately to the students, for the most part. Testing times were frequently not clearly established nor communicated.

Instructors receive scores either from a coordinator or via class profiles. Test results are unanimously provided to the students in approximately one to two weeks and generally on a one-to-one basis.

Test results are used in several ways, most frequently in curriculum planning. They are also used to validate placement and other ways.

The ratio of students to administrators ranged from six students to 3 students to one administrator on up to a classroom of thirty-five students with only one teacher. There was no uniformity in the way the tests were proctored, materials collected or person scoring the tests.

Several comments and suggestions were received on the last page of the questionnaire. These pertained to the accuracy of using the locator test in placement;

the needs of students at the upper and lower limits of the test ranges; difficulty of test for beginners and need to minimize students perceived threat or intimidation through practice prior to administration of actual test.

321 ADVISORY GROUP

Recognizing the continuing need for an integral partnership in the development of new testing products and processes, an advisory board comprised of educators representing the diverse populations served by the California Department of Education was established in the 1990-91 academic year. This eleven member board is comprised of CASAS staff (2); OTAN (1); State Library Programs (1); Community Based Organizations (1); Adult Education (1); and the California Departments of Developmental Services (1), Education (1), and Corrections (1).

The Advisory Committee met twice during the year on November 27, 1990 and April 30, 1991. Agenda topics included possible changes in testing procedures; data collection, aggregation, reporting and review; sampling design; needs of special populations and library based literacy projects; training; and technical assistance.

Chapter Six
REPORT SUMMARY

An eleven point plan was developed by CASAS in cooperation with the California Department of Education for the 1990-91 academic year. The work plan established major program objectives designed to enhance agency involvement; identify underlying causes of student attrition; examine test administration and security practices; expand ABE pre-post progress testing; facilitate data collection at the local level and expand training and technical assistance services.

Careful and effective planning during each program phase, from preliminary planning to field implementation through data analysis and reporting, ensure successful compliance with Project Goals. Chapters 3 through 5 discussed the eleven project goals established for the 1990-91 academic year and the means by which each was achieved. A few of the many 1990-91 goal related accomplishments are highlighted below:

- New appraisal and placement instruments developed
- Scannable answer sheets developed to facilitate data collection
- 321 Administration Manual updated
- Fall training and ongoing training and technical assistance provided to more than 248 participants statewide
- 28% overall increase in data collected
- 6% increase in paired pre-post data

- 321 Advisory Committee established
- Accountability indicators expanded
- Statewide accountability report prepared
- Raw scores used to capture data on students who previously topped out
- New sampling guidelines developed and disseminated
- Quality control and attrition pilot studies conducted

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING

Project Goal 1.6 requires a program evaluation report in satisfaction of state and federal reporting requirements with the specific objective to provide a final report to the state Department of Education by July 30, 1991. Compliance with this project goal is ultimately accomplished by generation and delivery of this report. This Statewide Accountability Report represents the full spectrum of ABE/321 federally funded adult basic education programs in California with all agency and program types and levels represented in the data and subsequent findings reported.

A close association between CASAS, field practitioners in adult basic education and the California Department of Education is ongoing and several interim reports and materials were provided including:

CASAS Special Report, Accountability in ABE Programs, February 1991

Quarterly progress Reports presented orally at 353 Coordinators Meetings

Agency Reports, Spring 1991

ABE/321 Update for 1991-92, June 1991

CONTINUING AND DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES:

A pragmatic and dynamic process underlies ongoing ABE/321 activities. As effective student accountability indicators are identified, changes are implemented utilizing the CASAS system. Problem identification and resolution is systematically addressed and modifications and changes made accordingly. Ongoing activities include an updated 321 Administration Manual to reflect changes in data collection and sampling. Performance-based writing assessment pre and post-tests for three levels are underway and new Advisory board appointments for 1991-92 are under consideration.

For 1991-92, sampling of Adult Basic Education programs receiving Federal Section 321 monies will be selected for Spring testing as well as Fall testing. The addition of Spring sampling will allow for a longitudinal study of a sampling of adult learners as well as provide an opportunity to make demographic and achievement comparisons of those students enrolling in the Fall with those enrolling in the Spring. A new program cycle is once again underway bringing a sense of challenge as we approach the new academic year.